

Host Guide



#onthetablewr

SUPPORTED BY:



On the Table Waterloo Region

Join people from across Waterloo Region as we come together, make new connections, and build more meaningful relationships within our community. By gathering together, face-to-face, and sharing food and conversation, we can learn new things about what connects us and what we wish for our communities.

What is On the Table?

On the Table is an invitation from Waterloo Region Community Foundation (WRCF) for people, organizations, and communities to come together, share some food, and have conversations about what matters most to them. All the topics and highlights of the discussions will be collected and shared—giving us an exciting snapshot of what's on people's minds across the region right now. It's a fun, meaningful opportunity for people to meet, gather, and share!



Have questions? Contact
onthetable@wrcf.ca

What is Social Infrastructure

Physical infrastructure is the visible, built environment systems of housing, parks, roads, public transit, recreation centres, and the less visible systems of sewers and power grids. It's the systems on which **economic development** traditionally relies.

Social infrastructure is the system of organizations, spaces and experiences that enable people to connect with each other, the bridges necessary to build trust and civic participation, to create a sense of belonging and wellbeing. It's the system that enables sustainable widespread **community development**.

What can Social Infrastructure do?

What are ways to create meaningful interactions between different communities, different neighbourhoods, different groups, different generations? How can we encourage those sitting on the sidelines to participate in civic life, regardless of when they arrived here?

If we can build enough bridges, we can increase understanding of those around us, we can increase trust, we can increase a sense of belonging and safety beyond our typical boundaries. We can be a community capable of coming together to accomplish big things, important things.

That's the power of social infrastructure.

If you want to learn more about social infrastructure, visit wrcf.ca/socialinfrastructure.

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**Thank you for agreeing to be a host of an “On the Table” event.
We’ve created this guide to help make it easy!**



Plan your event

You’ve already taken the first step to hosting your On the Table event by registering. Well done!

Before event day, go through this checklist to make sure you’re ready for a great event:

- Read through the On the Table FAQ to answer any questions you may have about this community initiative
- Choose what topic you’ll talk about (Note: check out the information about how you could potentially link your topic to social infrastructure (wrcf.ca/socialinfrastructure), which is WRCF’s primary area of focus. Don’t forget – if you need help, we are here to assist you)
- Decide where you’re going to host
- Plan a menu - big, small, or even a potluck, it doesn’t matter. Just pick at least one food and one drink
- Invite and confirm your guests



Get set up

Before your guests arrive, spend a bit of time getting organized so you’re relaxed and ready to greet and mingle. Here’s a few tips to ensure you’re well prepared:

Print out the conversation cards and banners. There are three versions of the banner available for you to fill in the food, drink and table topic you have chosen:

1. Large (11x17) that you can post at the entrance to your event
2. Small (8.5x11) that you can use to take a photo with your group
3. Table card that you can place on your table(s)

All the materials are available for download at wrcf.ca/onthetable

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Be a good host

Your guests have arrived, people have been introduced, and now they're looking to you for guidance. Don't worry! On the Table doesn't have to be complicated, and you have everything you need to help us know "what we can do to create a stronger community". Here's how you can keep things rolling:

- Use the conversation cards to break the ice and get everyone talking
- See if someone wants to take summary notes during the discussion. This will help you when you reply to the feedback survey that we send you after the event
- Share the topic you've chosen with the group and explain why it's important to you
- Give everyone a chance to talk about what's on their mind. If new topics come up during the discussion, that's okay too
- Talk about how your topic links to social infrastructure – what opportunities do you see?
- Remember this conversation can be as structured or as free as you want. It's all up to you

At the end of your conversation, take a few minutes to thank your guests. If they are going to want to keep updated on the progress of On the Table, provide them with the website address for WRCF (wrcf.ca). They can go to that site, and subscribe to our newsletter, which will include a link to the report when it is published later in the summer.

If your group would also like to talk about taking action, we've provided a "take action worksheet". Fill that in together, and the outputs can be provided to WRCF along with your feedback survey to help us see if there are actions we can tackle together.

We would love to have photos and videos of events. Check with your guests and snap a few that you can send to us along with your feedback survey.

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Share what happened

You did it! Thanks so much for doing your part to bring people together in your community.

Now we want to know how it went and what you talked about:

- Post a comment on social media using **#onthetablewr** on Facebook, Instagram, X, or LinkedIn. Share pictures of your event, the food you served, and anything interesting that came up during your conversation. We encourage you to complete and share this statement "I participated in #onthetablewr because..."
- After the event you will receive a short survey from WRCF. It will ask you for the information you to give us an important snapshot of what's on people's minds across Waterloo Region right now. We will compile all the information in a report and look forward to sharing it with you and other members of our community!

If you have any questions or comments, don't hesitate to reach out to **onthetable@wrcf.ca**.

**Bagels, Coffee &
Social Infrastructure**

**Tea, Kebabs &
Community
Events**

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